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IS THE CANADIAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

RATES POSSIBLE IN ENGLAND?

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BY

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Is the Canadian System of Education Rates possible in England?

MR. HUGH BIRLEY, the respected Member for Manchester, is reported to have said, at the recent Church Congress at Stoke: 'The compulsory payment of rates to maintain Board Schools by those who taxed themselves heavily to sustain efficient Voluntary Schools was a real grievance, and it was not surprising that a demand had arisen for a system analogous to that of Canada, whereby the 'ratepayer could assign his rate to the class of schools which he preferred. It remained, however, for the advocates of this plan to show how it could be worked in practice, as it would inevitably be more complicated in this country than in Canada.' As an advocate for the principle of the Canadian system, I accept Mr. Birley's appeal, and I will endeavour to show how it might be adapted to meet our present wants in England.

That a system to work practically in London or Manchester, or other large towns, must be more complicated in its arrangements than the system existing in Canada, will be obvious to all who read the following provision of the Canadian system: 'In Lower Canada, whenever in any municipality the regulations and arrangements made by the Commissioners of any school are not agreeable to *any number*

whatever of the inhabitants professing a religious faith different from that of the majority of the inhabitants of such municipality, the inhabitants so dissentient may collectively signify, in writing, such dissent to the Chairman of the Commissioners, and give in the names of three trustees chosen by them (for three years, one retiring each year), which trustees shall have all the powers and be subject to all the duties of School Commissioners, for the purpose of establishing and managing dissentient schools. They become a corporation, they constitute their own school districts, have the sole right of fixing and collecting the assessments to be levied on the dissentient inhabitants; are entitled to receive, out of the General School Fund appropriated to the municipality, a share bearing the same proportion to the whole sum allotted as the number of children attending school at the same time in the municipality, and a similar share of the building fund.*

In Upper Canada the liberty to dissentients of establishing separate schools is more circumscribed. There, 'Protestants can only establish a separate school when the teacher of the common school is a Roman Catholic, and upon written application to the municipal council of twelve or more heads of families resident in the municipality; Roman Catholics, only after the convention of a meeting by any five or more Roman Catholic heads of families, being freeholders or householders, and resident within the school section.†

The different circumstances of these countries and of England suggest certain necessary changes which it may be well to mention at the outset. The population of Upper and Lower Canada is about equal to that under the control of the London School Board. In the one case, therefore, we have a thinly scattered people; in the other, closely packed masses.

* Rev. J. Fraser's (now Bishop of Manchester) Report on the Common School System of the United States, and Upper and Lower Canada, 1866, pp. 308, 309.

† Ibid, p 308.

A liberty, therefore, of indefinitely multiplying schools of different religious characters may be safely left in Canada, where the circumstances of the country afford sufficient protection against its abuse; whilst in London we should need a rule that would secure liberty wherever there is a well-defined difference of religious belief, but drawing a line, which would prevent a very few people, from mere love of singularity, setting up schools to be assisted out of the rates; otherwise, persons wishing to destroy the liberty of establishing schools with separate religious instruction might multiply schools merely to add to the difficulties of administering the system. As many bodies of Nonconformists voluntarily united to establish schools on the principles of the British and Foreign School Society, and as they now find the kind of religious teaching which they advocated the religion usually taught in Board schools,* they could not well now object to continue the union so formed. If this were done, we should probably find that the only religious bodies who desired to maintain their own separate schools would be the Church of England, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Roman Catholics, and the Jews. If, however, any of the other bodies should wish for support, out of the rates specially allocated by their own members, for schools in which they were directly interested, there should be liberty given for a separate system, to be allowed whenever it could be shown that schools of a sufficient size to be really efficient would be established; or it might be better to throw upon the representative bodies of each religious denomination the responsibility of requiring separate schools for the members of their own communion, instead of leaving it in the hands of individuals. In this

* Virtually what is called "undenominational religious teaching" has become the established religion of the country for educational purposes. The Act of 1870 encourages such teaching, tolerates teaching that is less definite or dogmatic, but inflicts upon those who wish to inculcate religious truth more definitely or distinctively the heavy fine of having to support schools which they disapprove before they are allowed to support their own schools.

case the Convocations would speak for the Church ; their respective Conferences for the different bodies of Methodists ; the Congregational Union for the Independents, and so on.

The difference between what has been just proposed and the Canadian system is simply this : that in the latter case the individual school is recognised as the unit, whilst in the former all the schools founded to support the same religious principles have to be so regarded, and treated as the basis on which the arrangements are founded. This cannot be called a difference of principle, for it simply amounts to this, that where schools are sparse it is easy to care for them separately—where they exist in large numbers it is necessary to treat them in groups.

A definition, then, having been arrived at, as to the groups of schools to which ratepayers may appropriate their rates, the collectors would have their ratebooks so ruled that each payment should be entered in accordance with the wishes of the contributors, and it might be required that notice of such wish should be given beforehand to the rating authorities ; if no wish as to its appropriation was expressed, then the rate should be credited to the existing Board School system, as that is in possession of the ground. And as there is a large amount of rates paid by public bodies including men of all kinds of opinions—such as joint-stock companies, guilds or public companies, railways, corporations, &c.—from whom it would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a special appropriation of their rates, it would be well to apply such rates to meet the general expenditure of the Board about which there is no difference of religious opinion—such as office expenses, charges for enforcing compulsory attendance, the support of children at industrial schools, and such like.

The starting-point, then, would be this : that no school should have a claim for consideration that is not certified as ‘efficient’ by H.M.’s Inspector, and that is not willing to receive

children under the provisions of such a conscience clause as is ordered by Parliament ; but, with this exception, it should be perfectly free to the managers to have definitely taught the principles of their own faith ; that no Denominational School should be helped out of funds not specially allocated to such schools ; and it should also be equally accepted as a principle, that the rate over the same rating area should be equal. No excessive needs of Denominational Schools over Board Schools, or of Board Schools over Denominational Schools, should justify a heavier compulsory payment by the friends of one system or the other. Any differences that might arise between them as to the amount of money needed must be adjusted on the spending side of the account, *i.e.* in the application of the rate—not on the receiving side of the account, *i.e.* the levying of the rate.

I now turn, therefore, to the manner in which the rate should be applied, in which it is supposed that the whole difficulty of the problem exists. And as I think there are two ways in which this could be done, not equally satisfactory, but either of them far better than the rule which now prevails, and as each plan has conditions in it which might recommend it for adoption rather than the other, I will discuss them separately.

The first, and on some accounts the simplest, plan would be to subsidise the Voluntary Schools. This could be done by fixing a maximum sum per child in average attendance, which the managers of Voluntary Schools could claim out of the rate. It having been laid down as a fixed rule that no school should be assisted that is not certified as ‘efficient’ by H.M.’s Inspector, a certificate from him, as to the number of children in average attendance, should suffice to constitute a claim for help. But the cost of schools varies ; when the school-fee is high, the amount required from external sources is low, and *vice versâ*. Here, then, two dangers have to be guarded against : on the one hand, if all schools have a right to make

an equal claim, those designed for the upper portions of the labouring classes, who can afford to pay a high school-fee (say fourpence or more per child per week), might find themselves entitled to claim a higher sum per child than was needed to balance the school accounts ; whilst, on the other hand, schools intended for the poorer sections of the people, who can only afford to pay a lower fee, would find themselves straitened, and the managers would be unable to carry on their schools without placing an unduly heavy burden on subscribers. These difficulties might be met by—(1) allowing a graduated rate of assistance to schools to meet the difference in their school-fees. If such fees were ninepence a week, then nothing should be given ; if they were sixpence a week, then (say) that the maximum grant might be half-a-crown a child ; if fourpence a week, five shillings ; if threepence, seven shillings and sixpence ; if twopence, ten shillings ; and if a penny, twelve shillings.* Or (2) by fixing one uniform rate of assistance, but allowing parishes to group their schools, so that, when practicable, each group should include some schools at higher fees, and others at lower fees, and then for the calculations to cover the whole group, so that for purposes of account they should all be taken together. And (3) for the accounts of all schools obtaining help out of appropriated rates to be subjected to a rigid audit, so that in no case should the subsidy out of the rate exceed the actual deficit ; whilst no extravagant or unusual payments should be made good out of this common fund, and no charges should be allowed for school treats, &c.

In the event of the sum allocated by the ratepayers to the maintenance of schools of a particular character (Church, Wesleyan, Roman Catholic, or any other) not being sufficient

* It will be noticed that the increase of grant is not equal to the decrease of school fees. This is proposed for two reasons :—(1) To encourage managers to charge as high fees as the people can afford to pay. (2) Because a school ought to have additional advantages, and so to be more expensively managed, to meet the larger payments by the scholars.

to make good the demands upon it, according to the scale fixed upon, then there should be a *pro ratâ* reduction, to such an extent as would secure fair distribution of the sum raised amongst all the schools having a claim upon it. The estimate for each year might be made upon the number of children in average attendance during the previous year, in schools belonging to the particular denomination concerned; whilst the amount of money likely to be realised should be calculated upon the general principles with which all municipal officers entrusted with the collection of rates must be familiar.

The difficulty of such a scheme would be in the application of a possible unappropriated portion of the rate intended for schools of a particular character. There could be no loss to the general or unappropriated portion of the rate, as the subsidy to Voluntary Schools is to be so calculated that it shall not exceed the amount allocated by ratepayers to schools belonging to that particular religious denomination. But suppose that the rates paid by the supporters of a particular class of Denominational Schools should greatly exceed the requirements of the schools belonging to them, what is to be done with the balance? I will put the case in the most crucial form, merely premising that the figures I use are purely imaginary, as I have no data within reach by which I could in any way judge of their accuracy. Suppose, then, that the supporters of Jewish Schools in London paid £10,000 to the School Rate; that the Jewish Schools in the Metropolis had an average attendance of 4,000 children, for whom a subsidy should be paid at the rate of 10s. each, or £2,000 in all; this would leave to the credit of Jewish Schools £8,000. Absolute justice would say that this sum ought to be applied to the extension of Jewish Schools; and I think, if it could be shown that there was a considerable Jewish population in any part of the Metropolis unprovided with a school of their own, and wishing for such a school, that

such unappropriated balance ought to be applied to the provision and maintenance of a Jewish school. If a Board school already existed in the quarter, then let that be handed over to the Jewish authorities, who shall be responsible for the annual repayment of the principal sum borrowed for its erection, as well as for the interest still due upon the unpaid balance, and for the cost of maintenance. But if it could not be shown that there was any poor Jewish population needing elementary schools, then let the unexpended balance be applied to the undenominational schools in the hands of the Board, for it is obvious that, neither directly nor indirectly, could a system of proselytism be allowed to be furthered by money collected through rates. Another plan would be to apply whatever balance existed, after subsidising existing schools belonging to the denomination that had paid the rate, to the general purposes of the School Board, without any further consideration of what strict justice required; but in such a case every facility to extend its schools should be given to the denomination so contributing in excess of the demands made by its schools.

The great advantage of this plan would be, that it would leave the responsibility of denominational schools where it rests at present. Even though the rates should supply all that was needed to carry on the schools, their managers would be liable for all extra charges that might be thrown upon them for repairs, alterations, improvements, and for the payment of all balances not otherwise provided for; it would still be their interest to manage them economically as well as efficiently; and it would give the various congregations and their ministers the same interest in their poorer members which they now feel, and to which they give practical expression in so many important ways. At the same time, it cannot be doubted that in very many instances it would still leave a considerable sum to be annually raised by the supporters of the schools to continue them in efficiency. For many schools,

therefore, it would only be a rate-in-aid, making it comparatively easy to collect what more was needed, whilst for others it would practically supply all that was required.

But it may be said, is not this plan much like what Mr. Forster originally proposed in his Education Bill of 1870?—and did not Mr. Gladstone give the voluntary schools an equivalent in an increased grant when the proposal was withdrawn? It is quite true that it is not very unlike what Mr. Forster proposed, but it would be a great mistake to imagine that the voluntary schools had an equivalent for what was then withdrawn. Mr. Gladstone's idea was to add 50 per cent. to the existing grant from the Education Department. This has not been done, as the average grant per child in Church schools in 1870 was 8s. 9d.; in 1875 it was 11s. And even this addition is coupled with the condition of raising an equivalent sum to meet it; and besides this, the effect of the Education Act has been to raise the cost of managing schools to an extent that more than absorbs all the advantage of an increased grant. In 1870 the cost of the education of each child in a Church school was £1. 5s. 7½d.; in 1875 it was £1. 10s. 3½d.; so that, while the grant has increased by 2s. 3d. per child, the cost of its education has increased by 4s. 8d.

Let us now examine an alternative plan that seeks to utilise to the uttermost existing machinery. I describe it in the form in which it would be most easily worked; but it would need modifications and adjustments to make it acceptable to many for whose benefit it is intended, and of these it would readily admit.

The 15th section of the Education Act of 1870 provides as follows: 'The School Board may, if they think fit, from time to time delegate any of their powers under this Act, except the power of raising money; and in particular may delegate the control and management of any school provided by them, with or without any conditions or restrictions, to a

body of managers appointed by them, consisting of not less than three persons.' This section is extensively used by the London School Board ; every school for which it is responsible is managed by an independent local body of managers ; the members of the School Board for the division in which the school is situated are now *ex-officio* members of this body of managers, though at first they were not. It would be practicable, if authority were given by Parliament, for these local boards of managers to represent the various religious denominations (*i.e.* for every school supported by the rates of any religious body to have all its local managers members of that religious body), and for them to provide religious instruction in their schools of a kind of which they could approve, if the obnoxious Cowper-Temple Clause were partially repealed. In that case, it would be competent for the various religious bodies to throw upon the rates such of their schools as they could not maintain entirely from their own resources, and for the schools to be managed in all respects, except as regards religion, as Board schools now are.

If such a plan were adopted, the greatest care must be taken to secure the proprietary rights of the religious denomination to which the schools handed over belong, that in the event of the law being altered the schools shall be placed in the same position, with respect to ownership, that they originally were.

There might be a question as to the manner in which such local boards of managers should be selected, though there can be no doubt that it would greatly facilitate such an arrangement to require that in all cases their appointment should be confirmed by the School Board. As the members of these local committees are now selected by the divisional members, it might be advisable to relegate the selection of the first new committee to the existing denominational committees assisted by the divisional members ; and then, as vacancies arose, let the recommendation of new members rest with the

committee, assisted by the divisional members. It might further be a condition, that the clergyman or denominational minister most immediately interested in the school should always be a member of the committee of management; that if he personally took part in the religious instruction of the children in the school, the direction of the religious teaching should be in his hands; but if he delegated the duty wholly to others, that then the ordering it should rest with the whole committee of which he would be a member.

This proposal would admit of great modifications. To many the temporary transfer of the school to the School Board would seem to raise a fatal objection, and with that feeling I have some sympathy. But if, instead of the school managers being responsible wholly to the School Board, they were placed more directly under the control of the Education Department, and if that Department had an Education Board of each denomination having a separate school system wherewith to co-operate, it could not be difficult to make perfectly equitable arrangements.

Let us next examine what more can be urged against this alternative plan. It would limit the assistance given by the School Boards to denominational schools to those schools which were handed over to the Boards, and it would differ from what is now frequently done only in this—that the school handed over would remain under the management of persons holding the same faith with those who erected it, and for whose benefit it was designed by its founders, and that the character of the religious teaching would remain such as it had been in times past, instead of being used, as at present, to promote an undenominational system of which it is known its original promoters would cordially disapprove. The School Board would obtain school-buildings without the cost of providing them, whilst the denomination handing over its schools would secure the maintenance of such schools in its own principles. The difficulty would arise of knowing how to treat

small schools, which are generally costly to maintain, and often unsatisfactory in their results. But this difficulty might be overcome by leaving it to some authoritative body representing each religious denomination to decide with respect to its own failing schools whether they should be continued or abandoned; and as the whole cost of their repairs and maintenance would fall upon the fund specially appropriated to the sustentation of the schools of such denomination, we might rely upon a prudent discrimination in deciding the question.

It ought to be said that the adoption of this plan would not throw any new disturbing element into the estimates of the expenditure of a School Board. Every year sees several voluntary schools in London absorbed by the School Board, and the cost of their maintenance thrown upon the School Board. The same thing would happen under the plan proposed, and possibly to a somewhat larger extent; but nothing would be easier than to make adequate provision beforehand to meet such a demand.

It is possible that such an arrangement might lead to some clashing between the local committees and the School Boards as to questions of expense. The local committees would naturally be anxious to make the funds contributed by members of their denomination as productive as possible; they would be interested, therefore, in managing their schools economically as well as efficiently, and they would therefore be inclined to resist expenditure approved by a School Board which was indifferent as to how much it spent, and which would seem to them extravagant.* If occasional collisions of the kind arose, they would certainly be productive of good,

* It may perhaps be well to note, that the Local Committees of the London School Board seem to exercise great control over the expenditure in the schools they manage. The recent reports of the School Management Council show that at the Mansfield Street, Southwark, Board School, the gross cost of each child's education was £1. 3s., whilst at the High Street, Eltham (London) Board School it was £6. 7s. 1d.

as they would help to ward off a thoughtless outlay of money ; and if, in all cases of hopeless divergence of view between the two authorities, an appeal was allowed to the Education Department, difficulties might easily be smoothed over.

If such a system were adopted, the needs for adjusting the religious teaching in Board schools to the religious tenets of those who paid the school rate would be even stronger than under a system of grants-in-aid. It would seem only a matter of common fairness, that as many schools should be placed under the management of a particular denomination as its members, by their appropriation of rates, had shown themselves entitled to. So that if the appropriated rate of any denomination would support more schools than it had already provided, then, unless the Education Department was satisfied that there was sufficient reason against such a course, one or more of the new schools erected by the Board should be handed over to the denomination to be supported out of its surplus share of the rate. The chief precaution which would have to be taken in the application of such a principle would be, that the greatest care must be used that no excess of payments by ratepayers should justify a hardship upon the consciences of those for whose benefit the schools are provided : and, moreover, every charge for building and repairing, as well as for management, must be thrown upon the appropriated fund.

It needs scarcely to be said that under either of these plans a great advantage is left with the existing system. A considerable number of ratepayers would be too indifferent or apathetic to appropriate their rates, and in all such cases they would be applied to the Board schools such as they now are. It would only be those who had some religious earnestness—those who really cared that a child should be brought up as a Churchman, a Wesleyan, a Roman Catholic, or a Jew, rather than as a nominal Christian believing nothing

in particular—who would take the trouble to appropriate their rates. In other words, those who really feel the present system to be oppressive, and to place a strain upon their consciences, would have a mode of relief provided for them, whilst those who are content with things as they are would let matters go on as they now do.

But then it may be asked, how could you fairly permit persons appropriating their rates to vote for the election of members of School Boards? For my own part, I should be quite willing to disfranchise those who specially appropriated their rates, if it were thought desirable; but it is not difficult to show that such a plan would not be equitable or consistent with precedent. The Board, as a whole, would have to decide what rate should be levied, what number of new schools should be built, what should be their principle of secular instruction. Under the second of the plans I have suggested, all managers, denominational and undenominational, would be equally interested in the solution of all these questions; and if the religious question was settled by Parliament, so that all schools not sustained out of appropriated rates should be taught in the religion popularly designated as unsectarian, whilst secular schools were placed on the same footing as denominational schools, to be sustained by rates specially allocated to them, there would be no difficulty: for then, in every case, the religious teaching in the school would be settled by the local managers, and if disputes arose the appeal might be to the Education Department, and not to the School Board. And if the scheme first proposed—viz. of subsidising denominational schools at a fixed rate—were adopted, the representatives of those paying rates to be applied to denominational schools would have a right to seats on the School Board, as they would be equally interested with others in the amount of rate levied, and in the kind of secular instruction given, whilst it would be easy to protect the undenominational schools from their

unfair interference by special legal provisions. It should not be forgotten that though Parliament has interdicted the levying a compulsory Church rate, those who would not on any account contribute to a voluntary rate for Church purposes have still reserved to them the right of attending in Vestry, and voting upon a question with which it would seem they had really no concern. Possibly it might happen that those who would object to the supporters of denominational schools voting for members of School Boards would be the very people who loudly urged the injustice of excluding the opponents of Church rates from vestries held to consider what provision should be made for the support of the Church.

But it may be objected, would not such a plan as either of those now proposed be very costly? I believe that, so far from being more expensive than the present system, it would be very much less so. As matters now stand, ambitious School Boards, eager to obtain the exclusive control of education within their own borders, are multiplying schools at an extravagant rate, in order to drive existing schools out of the field. Such a mode of procedure would be rapidly stopped when both sets of schools had claims upon the rates, as then it would be felt that success was hopeless. Moreover, as I have already shown,* Voluntary Schools are managed at a very much lower rate than Board Schools are, and by sustaining the two systems side by side, a standard of economy would be kept up which would do much to diminish unnecessary expenditure: and in estimating the cost of the existing system and of that now proposed, it must not be forgotten that School Boards are continually compelling denominational schools to close their doors, or to hand themselves over to the management of a School Board. In drawing the comparison, therefore, we ought to make it between the sums which will have to be expended, if all the schools have to be supported out of the rates, under one system or the

* 'The Cost of Voluntary Schools and of Board Schools.'

other ; for, as it has often been well said, it is wellnigh impossible for schools sustained by rates and schools sustained by voluntary effort long to exist side by side, if one system is ever threatening to destroy the other.

There is a plan proposed to meet the difficulty I have tried to overcome, which I feel that I ought to notice, as I cannot regard it as practicable. It is said, how simple it would be for each subscriber to a Voluntary School to show the receipt for his subscription to the collector of the school rate, and if the subscription equalled or exceeded the rate, then for him to be exempt ; if it fell short, then for him to pay the difference. Such a scheme forgets that when a rate is collected, every ratepayer has a right to know that all are treated alike. It would not be enough, therefore, for a receipt to be shown, the application of the money paid must also be proved to be satisfactory. The rate collector would, therefore, have to take possession of the receipts for voluntary subscriptions ; and it would have to be demonstrated before a satisfactory tribunal that the money so paid had been properly applied for the maintenance of an efficient school. But then it might happen that a large number of persons would appropriate their rates to the support of a school conducted by a popular committee or clergyman, or existing in a wealthy parish, whilst other schools, less favourably circumstanced, were left to starve. And in such a case what is to be done with the excess contributed to the one school that would receive more than it could spend ? what is to be done for the others which would receive nothing ? Such a possibility would certainly be feared by numbers of school managers in poor neighbourhoods, and would effectually militate against our obtaining the relief needed in the manner thus suggested. Moreover, there can be no doubt that under such a plan the difficulties of adjusting at all equitably what was contributed to the support of a number

of schools, independently managed, would be so great as to be practically insuperable.

It may be thought that neither of the plans proposed would meet the difficulties of a country parish, in which there is only one denominational school. I think it would be easy to adapt, at all events, the first proposal to such cases. The levying the rate might be placed in the hands of the Poor Law Guardians, or of any body which may be formed to enforce compulsory attendance at school should the law be altered. And in such parishes it might be allowed to any ratepayer disliking the religious teaching given in such schools to appropriate his rate to any school of which he approved within the union, or within such a distance as would enable children from his parish to attend it if they wished. In the event of there being no such school, it is clear that the grievance would be reduced to a minimum, as a school could easily be established if a sufficient number of persons felt the grievance to make them wish to do so. Or it may be supposed that there would be insurmountable difficulties in applying either plan to parishes somewhat larger where there was one denominational and one Board School. Again I think not. For, in such parishes, it must be assumed that there is such a division of opinion amongst the ratepayers as justifies the existence of the two schools. If there is, then there will be no difficulty in supporting both; if there is not, then it is clear that one party is suffering a grievous hardship by being compelled to maintain a school of which it disapproves. In such cases power should be given to the Education Department to close the school for the support of which no sufficient maintenance is provided.

But it is not as a matter of mere expenditure that I urge such an adjustment of the Canadian system to meet our present wants, as I have suggested. The present system of Board Schools is most objectionable in the eyes of many

earnest persons of very different creeds. It seems to them to threaten the very existence of the Christian religion amongst a large portion of our fellow-countrymen. They may be right or they may be wrong in this belief, but the mere fact that it is entertained by many of the most earnest, devoted, and philanthropic men in the country ought to be a sufficient reason for its being respectfully treated by legislators. It is asked, why should the most tender consideration be given to every objection raised by unbelievers or half-believers, whilst the scruples of believers are ignored as if they were of no worth? It is further asked, why should the consciences of Nonconformists, when they claim what has been in the undisputed possession of Churchmen for centuries, be respected, and Churchmen be deprived of what has so long been theirs; whilst Churchmen are compelled to see schools which themselves or their fathers have built, at a cost of several millions of money, snatched from their grasp, and the rates which themselves pay employed to consummate the destruction of what they value, and the establishment of what they dislike?

Prudent statesmen should remember, that it is not always the amount of what has to be paid that has to be considered, but the spirit in which it is likely to be paid. Obedience to law may compel the bulk of Churchmen to pay school rates which they feel to be a burden upon their consciences, but pent-up anger will make itself felt some day. And it certainly must be desirable that such an important work as that of National Education should be carried on with the goodwill of all parties, as it might be under such a system as that for which I have been contending; and that it should not be made the battlefield of opposing parties as it now is, and as it seems likely to continue to be, with ever-increasing bitterness, until some relief is given to those who feel themselves aggrieved.





